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SIPDIS

NEA/ARP ANDREW MACDONALD DRL JBARGHOUT AND JKERN AMMAN RINGRAHAM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/23/2019  
TAGS: [KIRF](#) [ASEC](#) [YM](#)  
SUBJECT: THREE GUNMAN ARRESTED NEAR HOME OF YEMENI JEWISH  
LEADER

REF: SANAA 2043

Classified By: Ambassador Stephen Seche for reasons 1.4 (b) and (c).

¶1. (C) Police officials reported that government security guards at Tourist City, an apartment complex where the ROYG houses and provides protection for 14 Yemeni Jewish families (65 people), detained on November 18 three men acting in a suspicious manner near the home of Rabbi Yahya Bin-Yusuf, the community's leader. Rabbi Yahya told PolChief at a meeting in his apartment November 22 that two men acting in a rude and suspicious manner had been at his apartment November 12. He was outside the complex when the police called him November 18 to come back to identify the men, one of whom proved to be one of the earlier visitors. (Note. Yahya had provided the guards with a description of the men who visited him on the 12th on what is now presumed to have been a surveillance run. End Note.) A search of the men revealed a pistol hidden in the belt at the small of the back of one man and another weapon in the car. Though they did not give Rabbi Yahya any information as to their identities, Yahya said the police told him the men confessed to coming to Tourist City to kill him.

¶2. (C) The rabbi said he is not sure if the Houthis are behind this first viable threat to him since relocating to Sana'a, but he noted he frequently receives threats over the telephone. (Note. The Jewish families have resided in Tourist City in Sana'a under ROYG protection since they were relocated from Sa'ada in March 2007 because of direct threats from the Houthis. End Note.) When the families left Sa'ada, Yahya said, the Houthis took possession of all their land and belongings.

¶3. (C) Tourist City, a government-owned apartment complex, is located directly across the road from the U.S. Embassy and provides a clear view of the Embassy compound. In coordination with RSO follow-up, Embassy FSN Investigators discovered those detained were from Marib were still in custody, and the investigation is ongoing as to what links if any these men might have to other groups. The police promised to step up security measures in Tourist City.

SECHE